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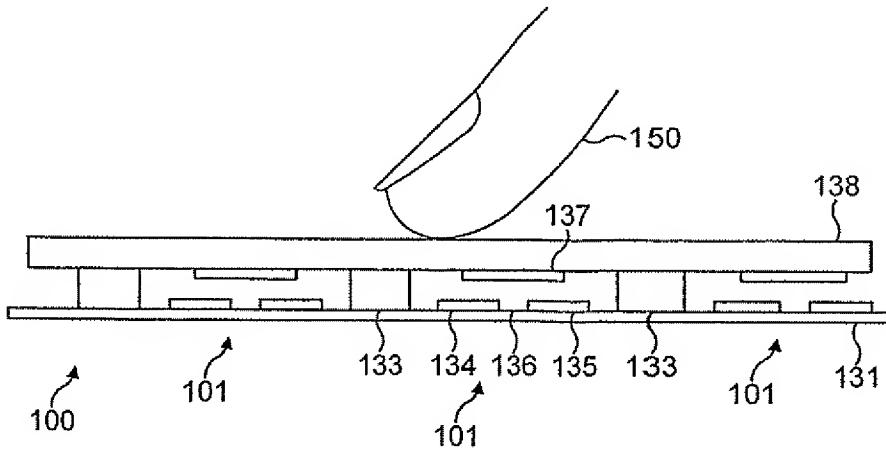
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- (71) Applicant (*for all designated States except US*): **PELIKON LIMITED** [GB/GB]; Bar Hill Industrial Estate, Saxon Way, Bar Hill CB3 8SL (GB).
- (72) Inventor; and
- (75) Inventor/Applicant (*for US only*): **BARNARDO, Christopher, John, Andrew** [GB/GB]; 42 Grange Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 5NQ (GB).
- (74) Agent: **FRANK B. DEHN & CO.**; 179 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4EL (GB).
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(54) Title: SWITCHES



(57) Abstract: A membrane switch comprising a flexible membrane (32, 38, 138) forming a movable part of the switch, the flexible membrane comprising an electroluminescent display (38, 138). More specifically, a switch of the non-latching type, typically for use with a flexible electroluminescent display, which switch comprises: an underlying circuit layer (31, 131) carrying a circuit (34, 35, 134, 135) which the switch is to operate, the circuit being broken by a gap (36, 136) which the switch is to close; a resiliently-deformable contact layer (32, 38, 138), mounted to face the circuit layer's circuit face, the contact layer's circuit-facing surface carrying a conductive bridge portion (37, 137) aligned with the gap, which bridge portion can be resiliently pushed into operative contact with the circuit layer to close the gap therein so long as an applied pushing force (F) is present; and spacing means (33, 133) that keeps the two layers apart in the absence of any applied force pushing them together. The contact layer is typically an electroluminescent display (39, 138). The spacing means is preferably integral with either of the contact or circuit layers, and is advantageously thermoformed in the contact layer.

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